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ABSTRACT

The paper outlines a procedure of providing staff development designed to meet the needs of all educational personnel, including teachers, support personnel, administrators, and parents. The role of the Central Ohio Instructional Resource Center in staff development is examined, followed by a discussion of needs assessment methods (such as content analysis, observation procedures, and the likelihood/impact analysis. Evaluation data to illustrate the center's effectiveness in staff development are cited. Sample forms and procedural information are appended. (CL)

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Practically Speaking: A Model for Cooperatively Providing Staff Development for Various Client Groups in a Fifty-Six School District Region in Ohio

Dr. Judith A. Fortaleza

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Title: Practically Speaking: A Model for Cooperative Providing Staff Development For Various Client Groups in a Fifty-Six School District Region in Ohio

Abstract:

This paper outlines a procedure for providing staff development which is designed to meets the needs of all educational personnel including teacher, support personnel, administrators and parents. School districts, agencies, and other educational programs work cooperatively with the Central Ohio Instructional Resource Center to acheive this goal. A description of the service area and the proedure for implementing this cooperative process is included. The document includes many needs assessment procedures including the Likelihood/Impact Analysis. Examples of forms and evaluation are also available. The document contains data on the success of the procedure.

Key Words: Staff Development, Inservice, Needs Assessment, Evaluation, Teachers, Support Personnel, Administrators

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Tenth National Council of States

On

Inservice Education

November 22-26, 1985

Denver, Colorado

Dr. Judith A. Fortaleza, Coordinator

Central Ohio Instructional Resource Center

Columbus, Ohio

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The Role of the Central Ohio Instructional Resource Center in Staff Development: An Overview

The Central Ohio Instructional Resource Center is a project funded through the Ohio Department of Education, Division of Special Education. It has been in existence for seventeen years. Located in the central part of Ohio, the I.R.C. provides educational services for fifty-six School Districts, State Schools, Ohio Youth Commission's educational facilities, and County Programs for the Developmentally Delayed. The service area is a seven county region which includes Franklin, Fairfield, Madison, Pickaway, Licking, Delaware, and Union counties. (See appendix A) Included in this area is Columbus City Schools with an enrollment of approximately 75,000 students. Also included is sixteen other City School Districts as well as seven County Boards of Education.

Providing and coordinating staff development activities is the main focus of the project. Other services include the dissemination of information through the publication of newsletters and responding to specific requests, the maintance of a collection of new and innovative instructional and professional materials, and the provision of parent resources. The Center does not serve as the sole staff development provider but rather works cooperatively with school districts to develop and/or implement their staff development plans. Services are provided for the purpose of meeting the needs of teachers, support personnel, and

administrators as they serve handicapped children and their parents. This service includes many "regular" educators who are required to work with handicapped students in the least restrictive environment as required by Public Law 94-142. This cooperative model could be easily adopted to meet the staff development needs of all educators.

Activities provided by the I.R.C. are approved and governed by a Governing Board made up of resprsentative school district superintendents or their designees and representation from agencies, universities, and parents served by the Center.

The Role of the Instructional Resource Center in Staff Development Activities

Staff development activities are provided for service receivers in various forms. First, the I.R.C. works cooperatively with universities in the region to provide off-campus college courses which are identified as needed by a needs assessment. These courses are held at the Center and are implemented according to agreements developed by the I.R.C. and the universities involved.

Secondly, staff development is planned for all support personnel such as School Psychologists, Speech Pathologists, Supervisors, Vocational Special Education Coordinators, and Work Study Coordinators. These activities are planned by task forces made up of a representative group of professionals from each of these groups. These staff development activities allow for the needs of specific populations to be met in the most cost effective and meaningful manner. Meetings are held in a central location, most often at the Center itself.

Eighty-five percent of the staff development activities provided by the Center is Cooperatively Planned Inservice. Using the C.P.I. procedures, school districts request staff development designed to specifically meet the needs of their own districts or buildings. Most of these staff development activities take place in the buildings of the requesting district. In the spring of each

year school district are mailed the procedues for requesting staff development services. To access service, the "Request for Instructional Resource Center Service" is completed and returned to the I.R.C. (See Appendix B) Prior to requesting service a needs assessment is conducted and an inservice objective is defined. An evaluation of the request is then made by the I.R.C. Coordinator to determine if it is in compliance with the defined "Criteria for Approval." (See Appendix C) If there are questions related to the planning or objective of the requested staff development activity, the district is contacted to clarify these concerns. Although one of the criteria for approval is the cost effectiveness of the activity requests are not denied soley on this basis. The same is true for the issue of cooperating with other districts. A district may decide they do not have room for outside participants or for various reasons do not want "outsiders" in their meeting. If this is true they can choose to have the activity closed to others in the region. To insure equal access for all educators within the region, a district may be denied a requested activity based on the number of inservices already provided for that district during the current school year. The "Criteria for Approval" also contains information about requests that cannot be funded. These include requests for instructional materials, substitute pay, and payment for a presenter presently employeed by the requesting district. Often costs of staff development are shared between school districts and the I.R.C.

Persons requesting staff development service are asked to make requests according to established timelines.
This allows for meeting timelines for Governing Board approval. It also provides time for the development and publication of a "Schedule of Staff Development Activities." This schedule is disseminated throughout the region to allow for choices of activities to be made in time to receive local Board approval for attendance.

Other staff development resources provided by the I.R.C. includes maintaining a collection of commercially prepared inservice programs. This collection also includes films and video cassette recordings. These materials are used by educators to provide their own staff development activities. The I.R.C. staff is also available as staff development presenters.

Often task forces are established to address specific region-wide problems or concerns. These committee members may develop a staff development activity to address this identified concern.

Needs Assessment Methods

Periodically needs assessment methods are reviewed with service receivers for the purpose of providing assistance in clarifying staff development objectives.

Two methods used by administrators alone for determining staff development needs includes the content analysis and the observation procedures. Using the content analysis requires the review of staff evaluation reports to identify weaknesses which need to be remediated. Also parental or professional complaints and student test scores can be considered. This methods is often subjective in nature and individually specific, thus narrow in focus. The resulting staff development activity is often threatening to the participant because the continuation of employment may depend upon the success of the activity. Data can also be collected by use of the observation method. Using this, personnel are observed in their working situation and notes are taken. From this information a staff development activity is planned to again remediate identified weaknesses. The reliability of this method is based on the objectivity and the observation skills possessed by the observer.

Staff development needs assessments which includes input from the activity participants are: structured and unstructured interviews; questionnaires; checklists; brainstorming; buzzing; and

likelihood/impact analysis. Structured and unstructured interviews, questionnaies and checklists are all completed on an individual basis while all the others are done in a group situation.

Before conducting a structured interview a list of staff development topics or questions is developed. Potential participants are then interviewed and asked to respond to the questions. Clarifying questions are asked to try to insure that each question is interrupted in the same manner by all the persons being interviewed. Unstructured interviews are conducted on a personal basis also but questions are not prepared ahead of time. Participants are asked questions about staff developmemt. Both the structured and unstructured interview take a lot of time to complete. Data gained from the unstructured interview may be difficut to compile in a meaningful way. Data from both interview procedures may be subjective depending upon the questions asked.

A questionnaie has to be developed before conducting a questionnaire needs assessment. This questionnaire is then disseminated to potential participants and results are compiled. With this needs assessment method the rate of return is often low and there is no assurance that interruptation of questions is consistent. When using this method many people can be polled in a short amount of time. Using the checklist method also requires the development of an instrument for participants to rate their need for various staff develpment activities. The checklist is

then disseminated and results tabulated. This method is often theatening to the respondents because of the requirement of admitting to a weakness or a need.

All group needs assessment procedures require a leader with good group facilitation skills. Brainstoming can be used with smaller groups. Using this method, group members brainstom all the possible staff development topics that may be relevant to them or their district needs. Topics are then prioritized by voting of the group. If the group is large buzzing may be used. With this approach the group is broken into smaller groups. Each small group is then assigned the responsibiltiy to identify the three most important staff development needs in a five to ten minute time period. All of the needs identified by the smaller groups are then prioritized by the total group.

The likelihood/impact method is a group problem solving system that is useful for many activities. When using this method as a saff development needs assessment, the group first brainstorms to identify possible needs or desires. The identified ideas are then refined into catagories of objectives. Following this, each objective is evaluated according to the likelihood of it happening and then evaluated according to the impact this event would have on the school district/building should it happen. Evaluation is accomplished by participants voting to rate each objective on a scale of one to five with one being low likelihood or impact and five being high likelihood and impact. Each participant is

allowed to vote on only one rating for each likelihood and one rating for each impact. Votes are recorded and calculated by multiplying the rating by the number of participants voting for that particular rating. These subtotals are then totaled together and divided by the total number of participants to find the mean score for the likelihood and impact of each objective. (See Appendix D) Results are then rounded up and down. Ratings are recorded in a matrix like the one shown below. This method of prioritzing objectives allows for a way to easily decide which objectives to address. Objectives with a high impact and high likelihood are most likely to be the most successful staff development activities. This method is objective and allows for imput from everyone. It allows participants to see why their favorite objectives may not be chosen to be addressed at this time.)See Appendix E)

Evaluation and Conclusion

All inservice provided by the Instructional Resource Center is evaluated. Data is collected for the purpose of making statements about the success and problems associated with using the cooperative process.

Since the I.R.C. is a regional center it is not feasible to follow up in school district to gather data about the implementation of skills acquired through staff development activities. Thus, information is gathered based on participants statements of receiving skills that can be used in their job performance. Also rated is the reaction of participants to the question, "Would you recommend this inservice to others?" Other questions related to the planning and the inservice presenter are also asked. (See Appendix F)

During the 1984-1985 school year the I.R.C. participated in providing four hundred and ninety-eight staff development activities attended by eleven thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven participants. Eighty-six percent of the participants indicated they had learned something which they could use in their job situation. Ninety-two percent said they would recommend this inservice to others in their field. These successful results are possible because of the imput sought from everyone involved.

The value of a cooperative process for providing staff development activities are many. First of all, it is cost effective. Many school district personnel use the "Schedule of Staff Development Activities" to identify sessions which may address specific individual needs of staff members. These staff members are then sent or allowed to attend those particular inservice sessions. Also if a large number of staff members request attendance for a particular staff development activity that district will often schedule that activity for their district. The schedule is also used to identify speakers for various inservice topics being provided by the districts. Paper work in school districts is also reduced by the I.R.C. taking on that responsibility. Many districts do not have a full time staff development person and this reduces the load of someone who has this assignment along with many others. Most important of all, by pooling resources the quality of staff development activities is enhanced.

Problems associated with a cooperative process include the need for advance planning according to established time lines. Also denial of requests can create a problem if school districts are relying on approval of staff development activity by the I.R.C. For the most part the system works well because regional personnel do their part to insure it's success. This is indicative of the importance placed on the concept.

Appendix A

Map of Region

SPECIAL EDUCATION REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS

1 - NORTHWEST OHIO
2 - NORTHERN OHIO
3 - CUYAHOGA
4 - EAST SHORE
5 - NORTH EAST OHIO
6 - WEST CENTRAL
7 - NORTH CENTRAL
8 - MID EASTERN OHIO
9 - LINCOLN WAY
10 - MIAMI VALLEY
11 - CENTRAL OHIO
12 - EAST CENTRAL
13 - SOUTHWESTERN OHIO
14 - HOPEWELL
15 - PILASCO-ROSS
16 - SOUTHEASTERN OHIO

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Appendix B

Request for Service

Request for Instructional Resource Center Services

Date of Request_____

Projected Inservice Date(s):_____ Time(s):_____

Inservice Location:_____ Room #:_____

Requested Presenter(s):_____/_____

Presenter's Title:_____/_____

Address:_____/_____

Phone:( )_____/ ( )_____

Inservice Title:_____

Inservice Objective:_____

Participants:
____ Reg. Ed. Teachers
____ Special Ed. Teachers
____ Support Personnel
____ Administrator
____ Complete School Staff
____ Complete District Staff

Estimated #:_____

Is this inservice opportunity part of a total staff development plan? __YES __ NO

School District/Agency:_____

Contact Person:_____ Phone#: ( )_____

Address:_____

Will this inservice be open to other educators in the Central Ohio region?

YES _____ NO ____

_____
Superintendent's Signature

Return to: Dr. Judith A. Fortaleza, Coordinator
Instructional Resource Center
470 Glenmont Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43214
(614) 262-4545

FOR IRC USE ONLY

Approved date:_____

_____
IRC Staff person Responsible

_____
Dr. Judith A. Fortaleza, Coordinator
Instructional Resource Center

Appendix C

Criteria for Approval

Local Inservices Planned Cooperatively with
the Insttuctional Resource Center

CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

1. Inservice Objective

   Does the inservice objective provide for assistance to special educators and/or regular classroom educators as they attempt to meet the needs of handicapped students?

2. Inservice Planning

   Has inservice planning been completed and submitted within the requested timelines? Has the inservice been planned to insure attainment of the inservice objective?

3. Cost Effectiveness

   Is the cost for the inservice presenter reasonable, according to recognized expertise and the number of anticipated participants?

4. Willingness to cooperate with other educators

   If the inservice topic or presenter is of interest to many educators within the CO/SERRC, is there a willingness to designate this an open meeting?

5. Number of IRC inservices already provided during the 1985 - 1986 school year

   How many inservices have already been sponsored for this district/ school/agency for the 85-86 school year?

In keeping with the IRC Project Guidelines, the following items cannot be funded:

1. Requests for Educational Materials or Equipment
2. Requests for Substitute Teachers for inservice participation
3. Requests for district personnel as inservice presenters who are already under contract to the district requesting the inservice.

Appendix D

Likelihood/Impace Procedure

Likelihood/Impact

1. Data Collected - Refined (Oral or written)

2. Each item rated on 1-5 (1=low 5=high) scale on both likelihood of occurance and degree of impact should item take place.

3. Results tabulation

Example:
Group=20
Item 5

Likelihood -

Rating #	1	2	3	4	5
	2	1	6	8	3

2x1= 2
2x1= 2
3x6=18
4x8=32
5x3=15
69 Total

3.45 Mean

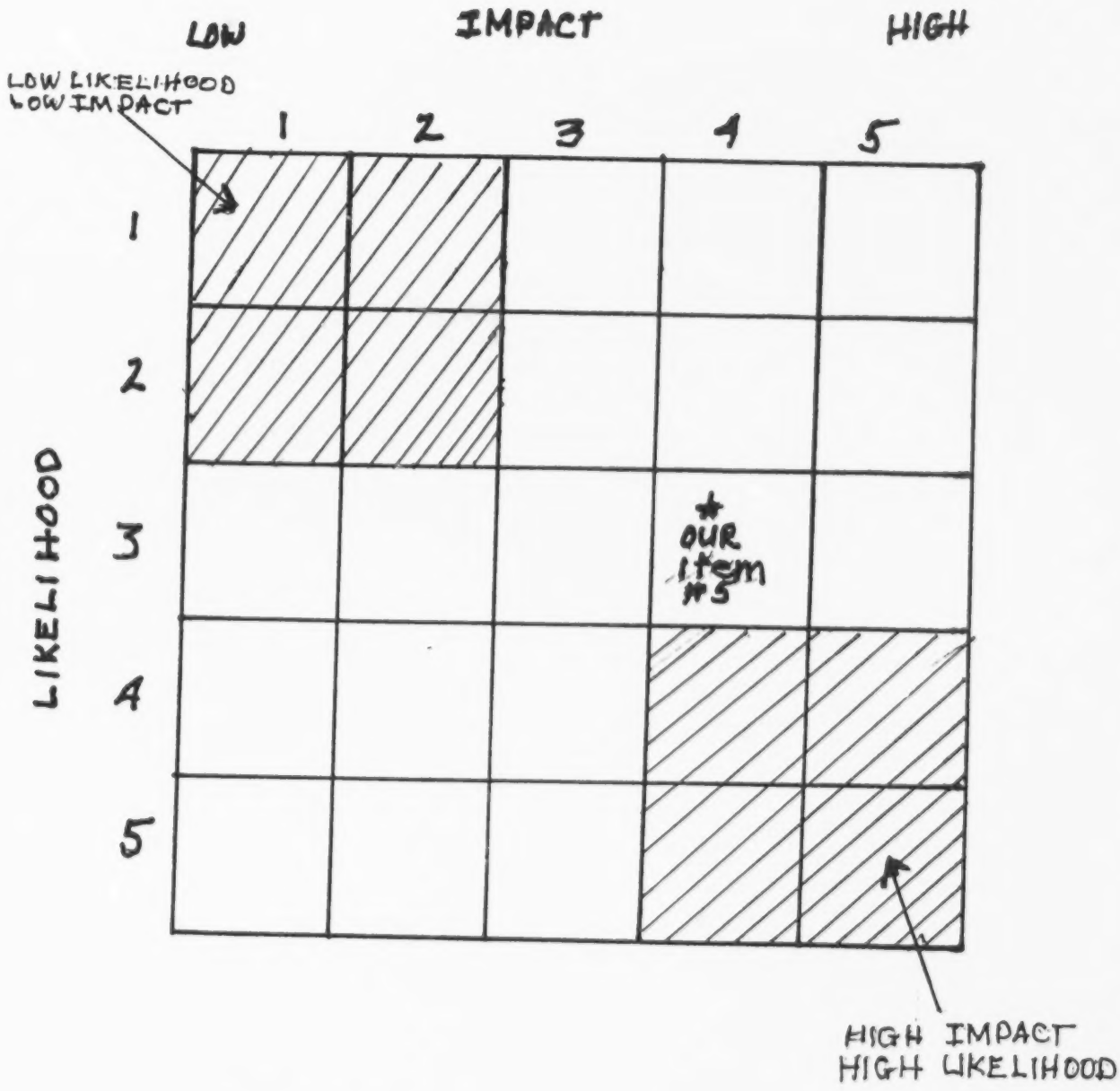
Impact -

1	2	3	4	5
		2	8	10

2x3= 6
4x8= 32
5x10=50
88

4.4 Mean

4. Round Up and down to whole numbers


LOW
IMPACT
HIGH
LOW LIKELIHOOD
LOW IMPACT
1
2
3
4
5
LIKELIHOOD
1
2
3
4
5
OUR item #3
HIGH IMPACT
HIGH LIKELIHOOD

Appendix E

Needs Assessment Matrix

STAFF DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

Dr. Judith A. Fortaleza

METHOD	NECESSARY SKILLS	TIME	COMMENTS
Structured Interviews	Interview design Data compliation	Lengthly	Collect same information from each person- objective
Unstructured Interviews	Personal judge- ment	Interview- er decided	Very subjective
Questionaire	Questionaire development and tabula- tion	Lengthly	Return not guaran- teed. Many can be polled. Quality of answers maybe questionable
Checklist	Checklist development and tabulation	Lengthly	Maybe threaten- ing to participants Can be very object- ive.
Content Analysis	Judgement. Organizing data.	Lengthly	Good data must be available.
Observation	Excellent observation skills.	Time to do individual observations	One to one process.
Brainstorm- ing	Group facilitation skills	One hour approx.	Good small group process.
Buzzing	Group facilitation skills.	One hour approx.	Good large group process.
Task Force	Group facilitation skills.	Two hour approx.	Uses a representa- tive sample of participants.
Likelihood/ Impact	Group facilitation skills.	One and one half hour. approx.	Is best done with an assistant. Very objective.

Appendix F

Evaluation Instrument

CENTRAL OHIO INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

470 Glenmont Avenue

Columbus, Ohio 43214

STAFF DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

Directions: Please circle the number which best expresses your reaction to each of the items below. Space for comments is provided as the last item.

1.	The organization of the presentation was:	Excellent 5	4	3	2	Poor 1
2.	Presentation style and activities were:	Very Appropriate 5	4	3	2	Inappropriate 1
3.	Overall, I thought this inservice was:	Excellent 5	4	3	2	Poor 1

4. Have you acquired any information through attending this training which you can use or implement in your job responsibility? yes no

5. I would recommend this inservice to others in my field.
yes no

6. Comments: